



**TRANSPORTATION SAFETY & ADVISORY COMMISSION**

**CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA**

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**TO:** Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission Members, Council members, City Manager Kurt Hodgen

**FROM:** Brad Reed, Transportation Planner

**DATE:** Thursday, September 19, 2012

**RE:** Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission Summary from September 12, 2012 Meeting

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The Transportation Safety & Advisory Commission met on Wednesday, September 12, 2012 at 8:30 AM in Room 205 at the City Municipal Building, 345 S. Main St.

Members and Advisory Members present included: Len Van Wyk (Citizen Member), MPO Greg Deeds (Police Member), Brad Reed (Public Works Member), Drew Williams (Public Works), Sgt. Roger Knott (Police), Chief Stephen Monticelli (Police), Doug Stader (DMV), Deputy Chief Ian Bennett (Fire), Paul Helmuth (Fire), Reggie Smith (Public Transportation)

Guests Present: Paul Clancey (President of Emerald Estates III HOA), two other residents of Emerald Drive

*Commission meetings are open to the public and citizens are provided the opportunity to voice their views/concerns about any item before the Commission. It is the policy of the Commission to move relevant agenda items to the beginning of the meeting when citizens are in attendance to avoid detaining them for the entire meeting.*

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*Welcome*

Mr. Williams announced that the Commission did not have quorum and would not be able to vote on any agenda items.

*New Business*

**1. Emerald Drive sight distance and parking problems**

The Public Works Department received complaints from citizens living in the Emerald Estates II housing complex on the south side of Emerald Drive regarding a sight distance problem at their complex entrance due to parked cars on Emerald Drive. Public Works restricted parking on the block between the entrance in question and the next entrance to the west to gain the needed sight distance. The City and VDOT require 250' of sight distance on a 25 mph roadway, a standard which is derived from the American Association of State Highways and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) publication, *A policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets* (aka "Green Book").

Mr. Williams noted that this is a public street and on-street parking cannot be guaranteed. The poor sight distance for residents on the south side posed a safety problem and would have been a liability for the City if an accident had occurred after the sight distance was confirmed as being sub-standard.

Mr. Clancey, President of the Emerald Estates III Homeowner's Association, and two residents were present to represent those living on the opposite, northern side of Emerald Drive from the parking restriction. Mr. Clancey explained that the restriction has caused increased parking in front of homes on the north side of the street, which often blocks the mailboxes and fire hydrants which are spaced out across the block. When mailboxes are blocked, mail carriers will not deliver the residents' mail. This increased parking has also made it difficult to accommodate guests and has increased traffic on the private street in the back of their homes used to access their garages. It was noted that it is difficult to fit two vehicles into their garages, so on-street parking is important to them. The residents on the north side would like to see at least a partial restoration of the south side parking.

Mr. Williams suggested consolidating the mailboxes on the north side or moving them to the south side, but the residents were not in favor of these options. Mr. Williams also suggested marking bump-outs to the radii of the driveway entrance, which would allow vehicles to pull forward and see past parked vehicles. This may allow a majority of spaces to be restored, but staff will need to review in more detail. Staff and the Commission will review options and determine what can be done to resolve concerns for residents on both sides of the street.

## **2. Federal Street @ East Market Street sight distance problem**

Complaints have been received by the Public Works Department regarding poor sight distance for northbound traffic on Federal Street turning at the stop sign at East Market Street. It was suggested that the on-street parking space at the end of the block nearest to the intersection be removed to improve sight. The Commission saw no issues with the suggestion and Public Works will move forward with the change.

## **3. Safety turning out of Outpost Bookstore on Forest Hill Road**

MPO Deeds expressed his concern about the difficulty vehicles have turning in and out of the entrance to the Outpost Bookstore on Forest Hill Road when traffic is heavy, especially on days when special events, such as football games are occurring.

He witness an accident occur recently where a vehicle turning out of the bookstore entrance was waived on by a vehicle in the southbound right lane, then struck by a vehicle in the other lane that he/she could not see due to stopped traffic. He noted that pedestrian access also continues to be a concern on this street.

Mr. Williams explained that the entire Port Republic Rd corridor, including Forest Hill Road, needs to be reviewed, as JMU is considering plans to construct a new Convocation Center and expand UREC. Mr. Reed suggested coning this entrance to make it right-in/right-out only during events. The Commission suggested that the bookstore use the rear, shared entrance with the Day's Inn Hotel, but recognized this may present difficulties due to restrictive drive lane width and the need for a shared entrance agreement between the two businesses. Public Works staff will initiate discussion with the Outpost Bookstore owner(s) to explore solutions and will report back to the Commission.

*Adjourn*